

LIBERTY CALL



Over 250,000 visitors from all over the world visit Bowfin Park annually. Bowfin is located across the parking lot from the Arizona Memorial Visitors Center. Also included is the Submarine Memorial Park, paying tribute to the men of the submarine community from World War II to present day submariners. The U.S. Submarine Force commemorates 100 years in the year 2000 as the stealthy warfare component of the U.S. Navy. Throughout the year, the men and women of the Submarine Force and the nation will commemorate this Centennial with local, regional and national ceremonies throughout the country including the Bowfin and Submarine Memorial Park

The Bowfin: A memorial to the silent service

By JO2 Robert Carr
NAVY REGION HAWAII

Paperwork from the arrest of a captured Japanese mini-submarine captain, pictures of former President George Bush being plucked from the Pacific and a tour through an actual WWII submarine are just a few of the many attractions at Bowfin Park.

Any trip to the USS Arizona Memorial would not be complete without also stopping at the park.

Located across the parking lot from the Arizona visitors center, it holds a complete history of the submarine service. The main exhibit is the restored World War II submarine USS Bowfin (SS-287), which visitors can walk through and explore.

"The Bowfin is a big part of the Navy experience here," said Gerald "Jerry" Hofwolt, executive director of the park. "It's very important we don't forget the sacrifices made by the submarine service."

Like bookends to the Arizona Memorial and the USS Missouri, both reflecting the start and end of WWII hostilities, the Bowfin serves as a tribute to the hard fight for freedom waged both over, and under, the sea.

The boat (not "ship," as surface craft are designated) was launched Dec. 7, 1942, a year to the day its homeport was struck by an invading force of Japanese planes that launched the entry of the United States into World War II.

The boat was nicknamed the "Pearl Harbor Avenger." During its war career, the boat completed nine war patrols, with 44 enemy vessels sunk.

The boat was decommissioned after the end of the war. But laid idle for a short time and was re-commissioned for the Korean Conflict in 1951-54, was transferred to a Naval Reserve training boat in 1960-71.

In early 1972, World War II submariner and Pearl Harbor survivor Adm. Bernard A. "Chick" Clarey Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet and Rear Adm. Paul L. Lacy Commander, Submarine Force Pacific Fleet, approached the Secretary of the

Navy about acquiring Bowfin as a memorial to the U.S. Submarine Force at Pearl Harbor. She was then towed to Pearl Harbor's Naval Inactive Ships Maintenance Facility.

In August 1979, the submarine was towed to Pier 39, near downtown Honolulu, where a group of volunteers from the civilian and military community eagerly assisted in cleaning and restoring the Bowfin after years of neglect.

In December 1980, Bowfin was moved to her present day location at Pearl Harbor. It opened to the public as a permanent museum in April 1981, and was declared a National Historic Landmark in 1986.

The park and museum is operated by the non-profit Pacific

stern to the bow on the second deck.

On the way, guests will go through the small galley, where the men ate in shifts, and past the engine and communications rooms, where war messages were typed on manual typewriters.

J.R. Krause, a park visitor from Atlanta, said the tour is an absolutely fabulous experience.

"Everybody should take the opportunity to visit the Bowfin when they're in Hawaii, it memorializes the heroes of our country," he said.

On land nearby is a circle of 52 stones, 3-foot-tall monuments commemorating each submarine lost in WWII, along with more than 3,500 men who served on them.

The stones have plaques listing the boats, its crew, and its last mission.

"Many times we'll come out here and find leis around the stones, they'll tell us their grandfather died on that boat," Burt said.

Brian and Krista Smith, visiting the Bowfin from Kansas City, Kan., said they had great respect for the men memorialized on the monuments.

"I think that would be the toughest job," Krista said.

There are also several other outdoor exhibits, including the conning tower of USS Parche (SS-384) and a Japanese Type 4 Kaiten, or suicide torpedo.

Hofwolt said the museum shows the history of the submarine fleet and how they lead technology in the Navy today.

The museum exhibits a collection of submarine-related artifacts such as submarine weapon systems, plaques, photographs, paintings, original recruiting posters, battle flags, detailed submarine models and naval uniforms illustrating the history of the submarine service.

Specifically, visitors will find:

- Paperwork from the first WWII Japanese prisoner of war, Ensign Sakamaki. His Japanese midget submarine, launched hours before the attack on Pearl Harbor, malfunctioned, and he was captured after landing on Ohai.
- A picture of Lt. j.g. George Bush being plucked by the wa-



The USS Bowfin's 5-inch gun and sail greet visitors as they board the boat. Bowfin Park is open daily from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with the last tour of the submarine starting at 4:30 p.m.



Bob Burt, assistant director of the Bowfin Park, tells Debbie Foster to "focus" while J.R. and Diane Krause examine the front of the 5-inch 25 cal. gun mount.

Photos by JO2 Robert Carr